Commodities	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Project goods	40	65	36
Textiles	6507	6824	6737
Handicrafts	398	443	524
Carpets	488	464	421
Cotton raw including waste	337	212	44
Petroleum products	401	310	86

SOURCE: DGCI&S

State-wise export data are not being compiled by DGCI&S.

(c) Major policy initiatives for some of the sectors include reduction in transaction time and cost through electronic processing of applications and annual advance licences for duty free imports; relaxation of various restrictions on units functioning in Export Processing Zones; recognition of services sector exports; special facilities for certain sectors such as chemicals, plastics, textiles, leather, gem and jewellery, handicrafts etc. and removal of quantitative restrictions on a large number of items.

No specific sector-wise targets have been fixed.

(d) The deceleration of exports is mainly due to South East Asian crisis and world economic recession. A number of steps have been taken to promote exports which include lowering of interest rates on export credit, reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation and simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy.

Export Growth

2966. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures for imporvement of export grwoth;

(b) the names of goods which are more in demand from our country; and

(c) whether the benefits would be extended to the manufacturer exporters?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) to (c) The major export products of India in terms of value are Textiles including garments gems & jewellery, agri. & allied products, chemicals & related products and engineering goods.

A number of steps have been taken to promote exports which include lowering of interest rates on export credit, reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation and simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives; identification of thrust sectors and focus regions. The Government is also facilitating investment in sectors with strong export potential, encouraging diversification of India's export basket, address infrastructure short comings, improve export facilitation measures and thus enhance the overall competitiveness of India exports. The Government is according high priority to exports and all necessary steps are being taken to put exports on high growth trajectory.

All the benefits available to the exporters under the Exim Policy are extended to the manfuacturer exporters also.

Advisory Committee on International Trade

2967. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had constituted an Advisory Committee on international trade;

(b) if so, the composition and terms of reference of the Committee; and

(c) the details of recommendations made by the Committee and the extent to which the export of Indian goods in the international market will get a boost and would remove tariff barriers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Committee under the chairmanship of the Commerce Minister, includes leading industrialists, eminent experts on trade, environmentalists, consumer activists, academicians, former diplomates, representatives of Chambers of Commerce, Commerce Secretary and Special Secretary (Commerce) of GOI, The names of the Members of the Committee are:

(1) Shri Rahul Bajaj, CMD, Bajaj Auto Ltd., (2) Shri B.L. Das, Former Ambassador to WTO; (3) Shri V.N. Dhoot, Managing Director, Videocon International Ltd., (4) Shri Muchkund Dubey, Former Foreign Secretary, Government of India; (5) Shri A.V. Ganesan, Former Commerce Secretary, Government of India; (6) Shri Omkar Goswami, Senior Consultant, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi; (7) Dr. Abid Hussain, Former Member, Planning Commission; (8) Shri Krishna Raj, Editor, Economic & Political Weekly (9) Shri Pradip S. Mehta, Consumer Unity and Trust Society, Jaipur; (10) Dr. Amit Mitra, Secretary General Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI); (11) Shri M. Narasimham, Chairman, Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad; (12) Shri N.R. Narayana Murthy, Chairman, Infosys Technologies Ltd., Bangalore; (13) Dr. V.A. Pai Panandiker, President & Professor, Center for Policy Research, New Delhi; (14) Dr. V.R. Panchmukhi, Director, Research and Information Systems for Non-aligned and Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi; (15) Dr. Smt. Suman Sahay, Gene Campaign, New Delhi; (16) Shri K.B. Dadi Seth, Chairman, Hindustan Lever Limited; (17) Shri P.P. Prabhu, Commerce Secretary, GOI; and (18) Shri N.N. Khanna, Special Secretary (Commerce), GOI.

The terms of reference of the Committee are: (i) to discuss periodically ongoing negotiations in multilateral trade bodies as well as other bodies in respect of trade related issues, with special emphasis on discussions and negotiations in the WTO; (ii) to review the status of legislation/administrative action on international obligations in the sphere of trade; (iii) to examine, from time to time, non-tariff barriers and tariff barriers against Indian goods and the action being pursued for dismantling such barriers; (iv) to recommend strategies for increasing market access for Indian goods; (v) to analyze the implications of various changes in the global commercial scenario with the intention of recommending suitable policy changes; & (vi) any other policy issues that the Minister of Commerce may with to place for consideration.

(c) The first meeting of the Committee was held at Delhi on 29th January 1999 and the second meeting on 30th March, 1999. The Committee has recommended the establishment of working Groups for intensive examination of multilateral trade policy issues of contemprory interest. The Committee would be advising Government on a continuous basis. However, any policy initiatives in the complex field of international trade policy would necessarily have a long gestation period before a perceptible outcome could be estimated. A such, a long term view would have to be taken of the impact of the Committee's recommendations on India's external trade.